इस्पात और खान मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री रमेश बैस): (क) से (घ) इस्पात और खान मंत्रालय द्वारा खनिजों के लिए ऐसे कोई निर्यात लक्ष्य निर्धारित नहीं किए जाते। अतः उनके संशोधन का प्रश्न नहीं उठता। खनिजों का निर्यात वाणिज्य मंत्रालय द्वारा, समय-समय पर घोषित, आयात-निर्यात नीति के अनुसार किया जाता है। राष्ट्रीय खनिज नीति, 1993 के अनुसार निर्यात नीति में खनिज सूची स्थिति तथा देश की दीर्घकालीन आवश्यकताओं को ध्यान में रखा जएगा। खनिजों का यथासंभव मूल्य वर्धित रूप में निर्यात करने के प्रयास किये जाएगें।

Restructuring and Expansion of VSP

2861. SHRI N.R. DASARI Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations from Members of Parliament and other quarters regarding restructuring of capital base and expansion of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Basically these representations sought expeditious action in obtaining the approval of Government on capital restructuring of VSP. A decision, thereafter has been taken to grant the following financial reliefs to RINL:

(i) conversion of Rs. 791 crore interest free lean to 7% non-cumulative redeemable preference capital, redeemable after 2000-01; and

(ii) conversion of Rs. 542.47 crore of loan advanced to RINL from 1993-94 to 1995-96 into 7% non-cumulative preference capital redeemable after 10 years.

गैर सरकारी क्षेत्र में इस्पात की उत्पादन लागत

2862. **श्री अनन्तराय देवशंकर दवे**: क्या इस्पात और खान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या पिछले 6 महीनों के दौरान गैर सरकारी क्षेत्र में इस्पात के उत्पादन लागत में वृद्धि हुई है;

(ख) ऐसी वृद्धि का ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) इस वृद्धि से इस्पात के बाजार मूल्य में किस हद तक प्रभाव पड़ा है;

(घ) क्या ऐसे संयंत्र प्रतिस्पर्धा करने, उत्पादन स्थिरता बनाये रखने में समर्थ हैं; और

(ङ) क्या सरकार गैर-सरकारी क्षेत्र के इस्पात उद्योग की निगरानी कर रही है?

इस्पात और खान मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री रमेश बैस): (क) और (ख) जी, हां। आदान लागत में वृद्धि, रुपए के मूल्य में गिरावट के प्रभाव से कच्चे माल आदि के आयात की उच्च लागत जैसे अनेक घटकों के कारण इस्पात की लागत में वृद्धि हुई है। इस अवधि के दौरान टिस्को में 1100 रुपए की वृद्धि होने की सूचना प्राप्त हुई है।

(ग) इस्पात उद्योग उत्पादन लागत में हुई वृद्धि की पूर्णतः क्षतिपूर्ति कर पाने में समर्थ नहीं है। बाजार शक्तियों द्वारा निर्धारित किए जा रहे इस्पात के मूल्य स्थिर रहे हैं।

(घ) और (ङ) चूंकि इस्पात उद्योग को लाइसेंस मुक्त कर दिया गया है और नियंत्रण समाप्त कर दिया गया है अतः इसका भविष्य पूर्णतः बाजार परिस्थितियों पर निर्भर करता है। उद्योग में अलग-अलग कंपनियों का भविष्य अनेक घटकों, जिनमें प्रतिस्पर्धा का सामना करने के लिए अपनाई गई बाजार नीति शामिल है, पर निर्भर करता है। तथापि, 1998-99 के बजट में आयात शुल्क, आवास और अवसंरचना क्षेत्र के संबंध में घोषित किए गए उपायों के फलस्वरूप इस्पात की मांग की स्थिति में सुधार होने की आशा है।

Steel Plants in Public Sector

2863. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the policy to keep alive all steel plants in the public sector; and

(b) the new market abroad explored for export of steel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) After decontrol and deregulation of the steel sector every steel making company is subjected to the free market forces and has to be viable and competitive in order to survive and progress.

Since substantial, public money is invested in the public sector steel plants, efforts are made to provide them the necessary support and a level playing field within the free market framework.

(b) Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), the two major Iron & Steel producing PSUs, are exploring new markets for export. The new markets include United States of America (USA), Mexico, Latin America, United Arab Emirates (USE), Mauritius, Australia, Nepal, South-East Asia, South & East Africa, etc.

Appointment of a Contract Mining Agent

2864. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Orissa Government has appointed a contract mining agent for the chrome mines in Sukinda against the recommendation of the Central Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the Central Government are helpless in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI NAVEEN PATNAIK): (a) to (c) A proposal dated 30.3.98 was received from the State Govt. of Orissa seeking the views of the Central Govt. on their proposal to undertake mining operations of Chrome Ore over an area of 190.80 hects. (the same area which was earlier recommended by the State Govt. for grant of mining lease in favour of M/s. IMFA/ICCL) in Sukinda Valley under Section 4(3) of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957) and to engage M/s. IMFA/ ICCL as as agent of the State Govt. to undertake mining operation in the aforesaid area under Rule 75(2) of the Mineral Concession Rules, 1960. Since the proposal of the State Govt. was not found to be consistent with the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 (MMR&D Act), particularly Section 4(3) of the Act ibid, which allows only the State Govt. to undertake mining and does not recognise mining operation by the State Govt. through an agent, the aforesaid proposal of the State Govt. was returned to them on 23rd April, 1998 conveying Central Government's views to the effect that the proposal is not consistent with the provisions of the MMR&D Act.

.Subsequently, the State Govt. of Orissa vide Notification dated 17.6.98, has notified under Rule 75(1) of Mineral Concession Rules, 1960 that the State Govt. proposed to undertake mining operations for chromite over an area of 119.08 hects. in village Kaliapani, Distt. Jajpur in Sukinda Valley. The State Govt. of Orissa vide its Order dated 17.6.98 has also granted working permission to M/s. ICCL to undertake mining of chromite over the above mentioned area as an agent of the State Govt. under the provision of sub-rule (2) of Rule 75 of the Mineral Concession Rules, 1960 for a period of 2 years or approval of lease in their favour by the Central Govt. whichever is earlier.

M/s. FACOR has filed a writ petition before the Hon'ble High Court of Orissa, challenging the above mentioned Order of the State Govt. dated 17.6.1998 regarding grant of working permission to M/s. ICCL. The writ petition has been posted for hearing on 4th August, 1998 and thus the matter is subjudice.